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ABSTRACT

The Involvement Inventory, an instrument that measures a respondent's active involvement in life in three arenas--people, things, and ideas--was examined to determine its concurrent validity and ability to differentiate among high school students who have varying involvement with drugs. The inventory related well to other scales which measure related characteristics. Furthermore, through use of the inventory it was discovered that adolescent drug users, instead of being withdrawn and marginal, were interpersonally active and outgoing and, instead of being hostile and cynical, tended to be cognitively passive and accepting of others' ideas and pronouncements. It was also discovered, in passing, that high school boys become more generally active during high school, and high school girls become more passive as they move from the sophomore to senior year. (Author)

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THE INVOLVEMENT INVENTORY AND DRUG USE AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS[1]

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There is an aspect of relating to the world that is familiar to all of us and has become a common topic of conversation; it is the non-involvement and passivity of people. We hear about it in popular songs (e.g., "All the lonely people," and "Counting flowers on the wall"), and in scholarly publications: "Some students wanted and needed structure and direction and supervision. Others did not want either freedom or structure, but they would do whatever was necessary to get the credits required for a degree. A few always tried to get through by doing as little as possible, and if they could get something for nothing, so much the better." (Harrison, 1974, p. 335.)

Passivity became a focus of concern in this country when 38 people watched Catherine Genovese being stabbed to death without one of them coming to her aid or even calling the police (Milgram, 1970). What can be done should be done to understand passivity, discover its roots and modify it where possible.

The Involvement Inventory

Heslin and Blake (1973) developed an instrument to measure a person's level of involvement in life in three areas: people, things and ideas. Response to each of these classes of stimuli is measured by one of three scales named the "A", "B", and "C" scales, which stand for affective, behavioral and cognitive involvement. Typical statements are:

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Affective Involvement. I like to get close to people.

Behavioral Involvement. I always have at least four projects going at once.

Cognitive Involvement. I like to try to spot the logical flaws in TV commercials.

The present version of the Involvement Inventory consists of 102 statements, and yields 4 scores: one for each of the three scales and an overall involvement score from the sum of the three scale scores. The actual instrument and the scoring key are given in Heslin and Blake (1973), while potential uses and interpretation are described in Pfeiffer and Heslin (1973). Further validation of the instrument can be found elsewhere (Leidy & Heslin, 1968; Heslin & Blake, unpublished).

Although past validation studies have been highly suggestive, they have fallen short of being conclusive evidence of scale validity. If the Involvement Inventory is to be of theoretical and practical use, not only must it demonstrate that it can predict observable behaviors and preferences, but also that it is not seriously confounded by social desirability bias (e.g., Edwards, 1957), that it is related to the traits it purports to measure (Campbell and Fiske, 1959), and furthermore, it is relevant to meaningful "real world" problems. These goals were accomplished at the same time by the conduct of a study on passivity and drug usage among high school students.[3]

The three scales of the Involvement Inventory measure the extent to which someone is active or passive in three aspects of living. First, someone who is active in dealing with people is outgoing, open, expressive, and extraverted; someone who is passive is withdrawn, taciturn, closed, or restricted in his interpersonal relations.

Second, regarding the world of things, of getting work done, someone high on this dimension tackles tasks with gusto, and is able to plan and organize himself and others. A passive person is uneasy about projects and feels little need to accomplish them. Third, someone who is active in his approach to ideas, questions and analyzes, checks and criticizes what he hears. The passive person is accepting or not motivated enough to check out what he hears.

Previous research on the Involvement Inventory has indicated that the scales are reliable and they relate to self-reported behavior, preferences, and demographic variables in the expected direction (see Table 1). Results in Table 1 are drawn from a number of sources (Leidy & Heslin, 1968; Prietula, 1971; Burnham, 1971). Sample sizes varied from 1577 high school students from primarily the Midwest and South, to samples of 79 and 59 undergraduates at Purdue University.

Insert Table 1 about here

The findings summarized in Table 1 indicate that people who score high on the A scale have low interest in quantitative and technical matters, probably dislike working alone (which may account for their lower grade point average in college), but do prefer "people-activities," such as planning a party. They were found to be more extraverted Mediterranean, female and come from higher socio-economic status families than those with low scores. High B scale scorers were found to be actively involved in "activities". They liked energetic people, operating machinery, and teaching adults. They were found to be extraverted, unfavorable toward the Democratic Party and more likely to be male than female. The image that comes through has a flavor of the engineer or businessman -- a hard working doer.

The High C scale persons like the occupations of foreign correspondent and social worker and liked political independents. They disliked the idea of being an athletic director. They were likely to have rejected the family religion, to have enjoyed high school more than cognitively passive students, to be male and to have come from higher socio-economic status than cognitively accepting persons. In summary, a number of expected relationships between the Involvement Inventory subscales and certain "real world" behaviors and activities were substantiated in previous research.

Because of the underlying intent behind the scales when they were developed and the validating relationships found with earlier research, a number of relationships were expected with the multi-scale instrument chosen for the present study, Cattell & Cattell (1969) High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ). A number of specific scale-by-scale predictions were made using the Involvement Inventory and the HSPQ: Affect scale with A (Outgoing and Warmheated) and negatively with J (restrained); Behavioral Action scale with E (Assertive), G (Conscientious), H (Adventurous), and negatively with Q (Overwrought); and the Cognitively Active scale with B (Intelligent) and negatively with I (Sensitive). The relationships are expected to be of moderate strength because these concepts are not exactly what is measured by the Involvement Inventory scales.

Application to Drug Usage

As mentioned previously, if the Involvement Inventory is to be of value it must relate to socially meaningful phenomena in a theoretically meaningful way. Drug usage is one such meaningful phenomenon.

Previous authors (e.g., McAree, Steffenhagen, & Zeutlin, 1969) have suggested that frequent users of drugs are more alientated, on the fringe of their peer group, and, in general, uninvolved and passive in their approach to life than nonusers. Yet, other observers (e.g., Keniston, 1969) have noted that drug use, or, at least, use of certain drugs is more demonstrative of curiosity, a desire to share an experience with friends, a reflection of group solidarity or other processes indicating involvement in social life. A third view of the drug user is that he is skeptical about adult values, rebellious, and hostile (e.g., Suchman, 1968; Keniston, 1969).

Previous research was not as informative as it might have been about the relationship between involvement and drug usage because it contained several conceptual and methodological problems. There were two major conceptual problems.

First, past research on user involvement neither differentiated among three forms of involvement (affective, behavioral, and cognitive) nor did it try to assess the independent contribution of each form to drug usage.

A second conceptual difficulty concerns the distinction between a chronic, transsituational level of involvement and a more situation or stimulus specific type of involvement. For example, it has often been noted that users are often more skeptical about adult values than nonusers (e.g., Keniston, 1969). Does this skepticism reflect a characteristically questioning, skeptical orientation to life or does the skepticism refer mainly to adult values (rather than, for example, information from peers)? Investigators may have erred by making statements about chronic orientations based on situation specific data

such as anger about drug laws. To adequately assess the question of the adolescent user's involvement in life, we must directly assess his characteristic orientation rather than involvement in one or two issues. The Involvement Inventory can solve these problems because it contains three separate subscales and is transsituational.

Methodological problems. Some methodological difficulties have produced such inconclusive results that it is difficult to know what to conclude about early adolescent drug users. For example, studies have sometimes investigated only one type of drug (usually marijuana). Yet to investigate involvement levels of users, the range of drugs must be investigated for dynamics of the various types of drugs may be different (e.g., Wieder & Kaplan, 1969). Secondly, given the illegality of drug use, the accuracy of respondents' answers to surveys may sometimes be questionable, i.e., the results may reflect respondents' attempts to "fake good" for the researchers (e.g., Edwards, 1957; Blake & Heslin, 1971). A third methodological problem is that relatively little research has investigated usage among middle-class, high school aged, (particularly female) populations. Over investigation of males, college students, and ghetto residents, may show a distorted image of the dynamics underlying usage (e.g., Braucht, Brakarsh, Follingstad, & Berry, 1973). A final methodological problem is that some conclusions have been based solely on clinical judgment or have not used measurement techniques with demonstrated validity in the subject population studied (cf. Braucht, et al., 1973.).

In summary, the goals of the present study were to: a) evaluate the construct validity of the Involvement Inventory by examining its correlations with a large multi-scale instrument, and b) assess the

value of the present concept of involvement to understanding adolescents' use of drugs. In general, it was expected that those who use many different kinds of drugs would be more passive than non-users or those who used few drugs.

Method

Subjects

The entire sophomore and senior classes (555) at four predominantly white, middle class high schools in a metropolitan New Jersey city participated during the spring of 1973. Elimination of subjects due to clerical errors in questionnaire preparation and respondent errors produced a final sample of 415 students, 306 females and 109 males drawn from the senior (196) and sophomore (219) classes.

Administration

Subjects were informed on the morning of the testing day that they would be asked to answer "some questions" as part of a larger survey of high school students' attitudes and feelings about a number of unspecified topics. In a morning session groups of 30 or more students received a test battery containing: a) the 14 scales of the High School Personality Questionnaire (Cattell & Cattell, 1969), b) the Barron (1953) Independence of Judgment Scale, c) the Crowne-Marlowe (1964) Social Desirability Scale, and d) the Heslin and Blake (1973) Involvement Inventory. The sequence in which the scales in the battery were administered was varied randomly for each subject. In a previously unannounced afternoon session, students completed a questionnaire, described more fully later, about their usage of drugs. Again, the order in which the test questions were administered was counterbalanced across subjects.

To facilitate frank responses, instructions stressed the anonymity of the answers and told the students to identify their answer sheets with a randomly assigned number rather than with their names. Further, the questionnaires were administered by four trained college seniors rather than by school personnel; in fact, in the majority of testing sessions school personnel were not present at all.

Results and Discussion

Involvement Inventory and Other Scales

The 4 scores from the Involvement Inventory were compared with 14 scores from the High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ), with the Social Desirability scale and with the Independence of Judgment Scale (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 about here

Correlations with HSPQ. High affect expressors tended to be outgoing and warmhearted (A), happy-go-lucky and enthusiastic (F), and joiners and followers (Q2). People who were active behaviorally were similar to affect expressors in being, outgoing, warmhearted, happy-go-lucky and enthusiastic (A and F), yet they were also calm and emotionally stable (C), adventurous and socially bold (H), self assured and complacent (Q1), and unfrustrated and composed (Q4). People high on cognitive involvement were found to be tough minded and likely to reject illusions (I), and they were somewhat more conscientious and moralistic (G) compared to low scorers. Finally, those who had high scores in overall involvement were outgoing and warmhearted (A), happy-go-lucky and enthusiastic (F), and adventurous and socially bold (H).[4]

Predictions with HSPQ. On the basis of previous research on the Involvement Inventory, it had been predicted that the Affect scale would relate positively with A (Outgoing) and negatively with J (restrained and individualistic). The correlation with A was confirmed, but the correlation with J was weak, albeit in the right direction and statistically significant. The correlation with Q2, (a joiner, and a follower) was not unexpected (note the similarity to the negative direction of J, (restrained and individualistic), but the correlation with F, (enthusiastic and heedless) emphasized an aspect of the affect scale--irresponsibility and lightheartedness--that had been under-emphasized heretofore).

The behavioral scale had been hypothesized to relate positively with E (assertive and dominant), G (conscientious and staid), H (adventurous and socially bold), and negatively with Q4 (driven and overwrought). The correlation with E (assertive and dominant) was about zero and with G (conscientious and staid) was weak. Furthermore, there was a correlation of B with: A (outgoing and warmhearted), C (calm and emotionally stable), and Q1 (self assured and untroubled) that projected an image of the high behavioral scorer as in a state of inner peace, confidence and high self esteem that issued into action.

The cognitive scale was hypothesized to be positively related to B (Intelligent) and negatively related to I (Sensitive and over-protected). The correlations obtained were strongest with I and with G (conscientious and staid), indicating a tough minded, hard headed, thorough approach to life with no room for entertaining illusions. In general, it appears that the High School Personality Questionnaire served well to validate the scales of the Involvement Inventory.

Correlations with other scales. Correlations with the social desirability scale were generally weak, indicating that to "look good", to present oneself in a favorable light, was not the primary determinant of responses to the scales. The correlations with the Independence of Judgment Scale were also weak, but indicated some tendency for involvement to be related to independence of judgment.

In summary, the Involvement Inventory was related to a number of scales that measured analogous constructs (convergent validity). The lack of very high relationship with the scales in the HSPQ is appropriate since very high correlations would have been an indication that the Involvement Inventory was not contributing new information about how people relate to life. Discriminant validity, the extent to which a scale is unrelated to a measure of a theoretically unrelated concept, was demonstrated with the HSPQ. For example, being high in affect expression or behavioral activity were assumed to be relatively unrelated to intelligence and they were (HSPQ-B), and being cognitively active was considered to be independent of emotion and was (Q1 and Q4). Furthermore, attempting to look good (social desirability response) was a negligible determinant of responses.

Sex Differences in Involvement Level

Some sexism was uncovered serendipitiously by means of the Involvement Inventory. The fact that measures of both sophomores and seniors

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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were obtained allowed some tentative inferences about changes in people between entering and leaving high school. As shown in Figure 1, while senior males appeared to be more active in all spheres than

sophomore males, senior females showed no significantly greater involvement than sophomore females. In fact, senior females were significantly more passive than the sophomores on the Behaviorally Active scale ($p < .05$) and the Overall Involvement scale ($p < .01$).

Extrapolating from this cross-sectional finding to a longitudinal conclusion is risky because the differences between two classes could be due to a number of causes (e.g., changes in the neighborhood). Yet, contingent on future research, we may speculate that high school women become more passive relative to high school men in the three major areas of life as they move from the sophomore to the senior year. It is hypothesized that this change is due to preference by high school men for women who are more passive than active. Whatever the reasons for the change, it may well be a serious occurrence that may affect the full utilization of female ability in this and other societies (Mednick & Tangri, 1972).

Drug Usage

Multiple regression. If the Involvement Inventory is to be useful, it must relate to important social phenomena. To test the relationship between multiple drug use, the number of different "types" of drugs used by a person (marijuana, "speed", other amphetamines [as distinct from "speed"], barbiturates, hallucinogens, and narcotics) was computed and entered as the criterion in a multiple linear regression. Scores on usage, then, varied between 0 (none) and 6.[5] Predictors were the A, B, and C scales of the Involvement Inventory. As can be seen in Table 3, the multiple regression prediction was significant; the primary factors contributing to number of drugs used were affect expression and (weak negatively) cognitive activity.

Insert Table 3 about here

Although the B scale, had a weak positive relation to usage, the beta weight for behavioral activity did not differ significantly from zero.

In general, the pattern of relationships are not what would have been expected from an image of the drug user as withdrawn and passive. Users tended to be passive cognitively, but in relating to people they were quite active and outgoing.

The major conclusion to be drawn from the above is that the user is a good natured, socially extroverted, accepting, "go-along" type of person.[6] Such characteristics are consistent with the view of early adolescent drug usage as a reflection of peer group oriented attempts at closeness and solidarity (e.g., Eisenthal & Udin, 1972), and it is in contrast to previous reports of the symptoms of maladjustment shown by users (e.g., Green, Blake, Carboy, & Zenhausern, 1971).

The regression analysis looked at the total number of different kinds of drugs used without telling us about specific types of drugs. If the Involvement Inventory is to be a useful measure it should also shed light on specific kinds of drugs.

Canonical correlation. One way of looking for information on specific kinds of drugs is to look for the best combination of involvement scales for predicting the best combination of drug usage criteria. The criteria were queries about usage across each of 6 types of drugs (marijuana, speed, ups, downs, hallucinogens, and heroin) that the students indicated they used when asked:

"How often have you used this drug?"

"I used it once or twice."

"I used it more than once or twice, but I use it less than once a month."

"I use it about once a week."

"I use it several times a week."

By use of canonical correlation,[7] the best composite prediction-to-predicted combination fitting these individual variables was found (see Table 4). On the prediction side, students who were more expressive

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Insert Table 4 about here

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and socially extroverted (A scale) and cognitively passive and accepting (C scale) formed a cluster which related to, on the predicted side, a cluster of more use of marijuana, ups, downs, but less use of hard drugs. Adolescents then, who were both more expressive and cognitively passive tended to use the mood drugs (especially marijuana, ups, and downs) more frequently, and narcotics less frequently.[8]

Both the regression and canonical analyses presented a view of the user of multiple drugs, particularly of the mood drugs, as a person open to others' and his own feelings, and rather accepting of ideas from others. This is definitely not the picture of a withdrawn, socially isolated individual! Perhaps previous reports of the alienation and passivity of drug users pertained to adult users of harder drugs and to youngsters who have "dropped out" and into the drug culture. Resolution of this discrepancy in findings must be made, but at this point it is clear that the Involvement Inventory has been able to shed light on some real world phenomena, namely increasing

passivity of high school girls, and the kinds of high school students who use different drugs.

Conclusion. Previous work in combination with the present study suggests the general value of the three dimensional approach to involvement and passivity embodied in the Involvement Inventory. Moreover, the Inventory has been shown to be useful in giving some clarification to personality dynamics, especially as they relate to drug usage. Finally, some stylistic and motivational differences between the teenager who uses pills and marijuana compared to the teenager who uses heroin, were suggested by this study.

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Footnotes

[1] We would like to thank William Burke and Angelo Danesino for their assistance in gathering the data for this study.

[2] Requests for reprints should be sent to Richard Heslin, Department of Psychological Sciences, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

[3] The addition of the validation study to the analysis of drug usage incidentally insured that the interpretation of the Involvement Inventory in the particular subject sample was appropriate. Past investigations of personality attributes of drug users have not always assessed the validity of their personality measures in the context in which they were administered. The present study is thus an improvement and extension of previous approaches (cf. Blake, Wick, Burke, & Danesino, 1974; Braucht, Brakarsh, Follingstad, & Berry, 1973).

[4] Partial correlations between the Involvement Inventory and the HSPQ were computed holding the effect of social desirability responding constant. There was no significant difference from the regular correlations.

[5] The mean number of different drugs used was 1.2, with a standard deviation of 1.55. The most popular drug was marijuana and the least used were narcotics (heroin, morphine, etc.).

[6] A supplementary regression analysis added the Marlowe-Crowne scores to the three involvement measures. The same pattern of results was found as in the main analysis and, hence, the present results could not be readily explained as due to a social desirability bias.

[7] Canonical correlation selects the optimal weighted combination of predictor variables to best account for the variance in response among an optimally weighted cluster of responses (Morrison, 1967; Cooley & Lohnes, 1962). See Alpert (1972) for another example of the use of this technique.

[8] This finding should be accepted with some caution since a relatively small (N = 21) number of students reported using hard drugs (heroin, cocaine, morphine); furthermore, since the total sample was 3/4 female, it can be viewed as primarily true of females.

Table 1. Some Findings From Previous Research on the Involvement Inventory.

Reliability (Cronbach Alpha)	A .76	B .78	C .76	Total .78

Characteristics of High Scorers compared to low Scorers

Strong Vocational Interest				
Disliked	Electronics Technician Algebra	Democrats	Athletic Director	Conservative people Saving money
Liked	Poet, Planning a large party, Aggressive people	Operating machinery, Teaching adults, Energetic people	Foreign correspondent, Social worker, Political Independents	Discussing purpose of life, Jazz concerts, People who are natural leaders
Family Income	High	High	High	High
Sex	Female	Male	Male	Male
	Be 1st or 2nd generation, Latin or African vs. Northern or Western European	Be in more campus activities	Reject the Family Religion	
	Have lower grade point averages	Score high on Eysenck's Extroversion scale	Have enjoyed high school	
	Be higher on the Eysenck's Extroversion			

Table 2. Correlations Between Involvement Inventory and High School Personality Questionnaire, Social Desirability Scale and Independence of Judgment Scale.

HSPQ		Involvement Inventory A	B	C	Total
A	Outgoing & warmhearted vs reserved and aloof	38	32	15	42
B	Intelligent vs less intelligent	01	-02	15	06
C	Calm & emotionally stable vs easily upset	02	29	06	17
D	Excitable & impatient vs undemonstrative & deliberate	04	-20	-05	-14
E	Assertive & dominant vs obedient & submissive	-15	02	-04	-08
F	Enthusiastic, heedless vs sober & serious	28	30	04	30
G	Conscientious & staid vs disregard rules & expedient	-03	13	19	13
H	Adventurous & socially bold vs shy & threat sensitive	14	39	10	30
I	Sensitive, over-protected vs tough minded, rejects illusions	-18	01	-28	-21

continued

Table 2. Continued

HSPQ		Involvement Inventory A	B	C	Total
J	Restrained, individualistic vs zestful, likes group action	-19	-07	02	-11
Q1	Apprehensive, self-reproaching vs self assured, untroubled	-09	-30	-02	-21
Q2	Self-sufficient, resourceful vs a joiner, a follower	-30	-15	04	-20
Q3	Controlled, socially precise vs uncontrolled, lax	-07	18	08	09
Q4	Driven, overwrought vs relaxed, composed	-09	-31	-02	-20
Social Desirability		03	18	09	15
Independency of Judgment Scale		13	10	15	18
Correlations with Own Scales					
A	Affect (people)		32	10	70*
B	Behavior (things)	32		25	77
C	Cognition (ideas)	10	25		62
Total Involvement		70	77	62	

* Correlations between Involvement Inventory scale scores and total scores are inflated by the fact that the scale's scores make up approximately 1/3 of the items in the total score.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Prediction of Number of Drugs Used From 3 Involvement Inventory Scales. (N = 414).

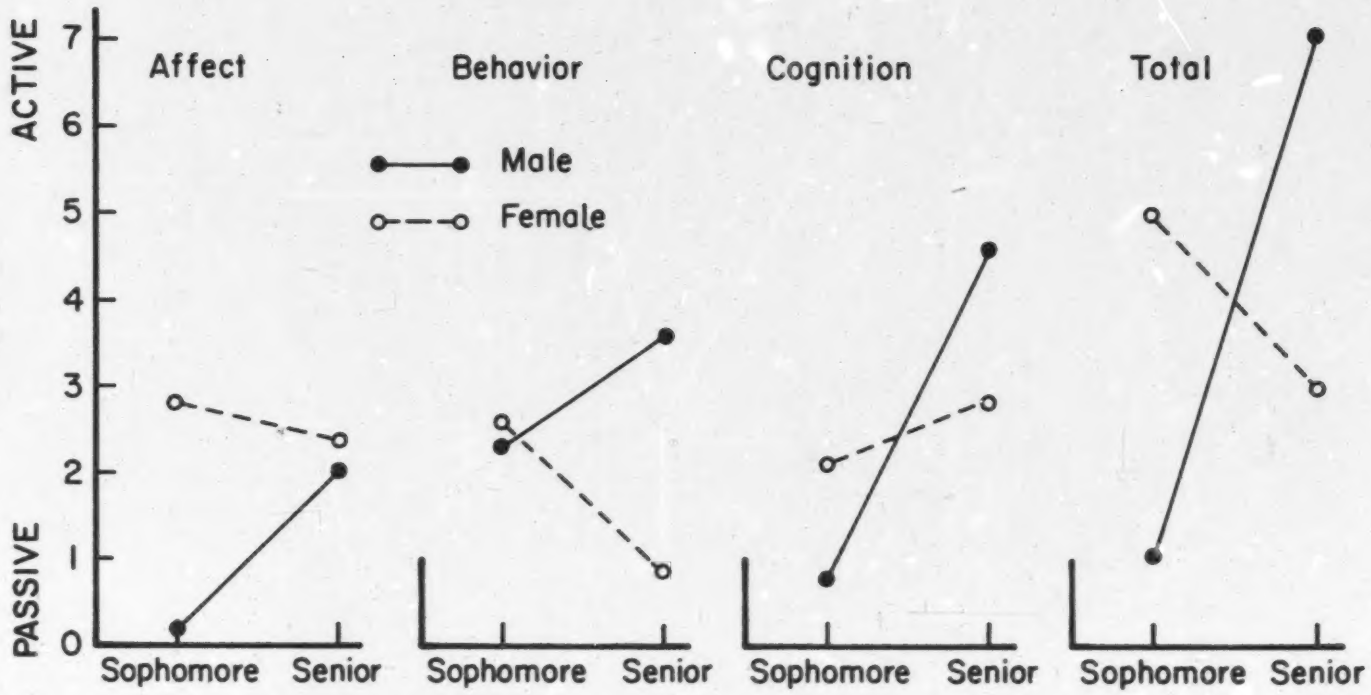
	A Affect	B Behavior	C Cognition
r	.24**	.11*	-.10*
Beta Weight	.23**	.07	-.14**
Multiple r = .28**			

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 4. Canonical Correlation Between Involvement Inventory Scales and Frequency of Drug Usage.

Variables	Coefficients
Predictors	
Affective	.7862
Behavioral	.2432
Cognitive	-.6048
Criteria	
Marijuana	.3635
Speed	.2154
Amphetamines	.3225
Depressants	.4670
Hallucinogens	.2107
Hard Drugs	-.4883
Canonical R	.253
χ^2	33.5509
df.	18
$p <$	.014


ACTIVE
PASSIVE
7
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Affect
Behavior
Cognition
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Male
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Sophomore
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Senior
Sophomore
Senior
Sophomore
Senior

Figure Caption

1. Measured Involvement in People, Things, Ideas, and Life in General as a Function of Sex and Year in High School. (For comparability across scales, all mean scores were subtracted from the highest mean score for each of the four scales.)